



City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: APRIL 17, 2015

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

THROUGH: MARK B. JINKS, CITY MANAGER 

FROM: MORGAN ROUTH, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET 

SUBJECT: BUDGET MEMO #24: COST ESTIMATES FOR LIBRARY TO ASSUME LAW LIBRARY

This memorandum responds to questions that arose during the Safe, Secure & Just worksession regarding the Library's priorities and what it would cost to assume Law Library functions.

Library responses to the posed questions are as follows:

1. What are the priorities of the Alexandria Library system and how does integrating the Law Library fit into those priorities?

In 2014, the Library conducted a comprehensive needs assessment study. The data collection process included a community survey that yielded close to 4,000 responses, a telephone survey, focus groups, interviews with community leaders, and a benchmarking study. This research identified seven priorities for the Library's long-term focus:

- Support for Learners of All Ages
- Library Collections
- Technology Management and Access
- Library as a Community Hub
- Community Relations, Marketing and Branding
- Organizational Health and Development
- Advocacy and Fundraising

The Law Library did not appear as a priority in any of the Library's research; however, offering access to legal information may fit under the larger heading of "Library as a Community Hub."

2. What would it cost the Library system to operate the Law Library?

The total annual cost estimate ranges from \$89,107 to \$140,152, depending on levels of staffing. This estimate includes for staffing and collection related expenditures. The Alexandria Library would require a part-time Librarian I at the GS-15 level to manage the Law Library and maintain its collections and services. The table below details costs if the part-time staff position managing the Law Library was 0.5 FTE or 0.75 FTE. Additional support would be required by the Library's Technical Services Division to assist with ongoing tasks such as ordering materials, cataloging items, handling updates and filings for Law Library materials, and maintaining the Law Library's web presence. The cost to cross-train Library employees from existing branches so that they can conduct these tasks for the Law Library is estimated at \$10,000.

Collections-related costs involve purchasing materials for the Law Library's collection in order to keep the collection current. Law related materials are often updated by the publisher on a monthly basis. The Library estimated that it would cost \$30,000 to keep materials current. In addition, electronic subscription to either Lexis-Nexis and/or Westlaw would cost \$20,000, which would continue to be funded by court case filing fee revenue. Additional income from the court case filing fees or Alexandria Bar Association dues would be used to maintain the Law Library's various other subscriptions, such as the United States Code Service, Code of Virginia and various legal opinions/reporters.

STAFFING LEVELS			Funding Stream
P/T Law Library Staff	\$29,107 - \$46,768	20 hrs a week	None available in
<i>Benefits included</i>	\$43,6660- \$70,152	30 hrs a week	FY 2016 budget
Cross Training of Alexandria Library Staff	\$10,000	Existing Library staff would contribute 10 hrs a week to Law Library Services	None available in FY 2016 budget
COLLECTIONS			
Databases	\$20,000	Westlaw, Lexis	Filing Fees/Bar Association Dues
Materials/Books	\$30,000		Filing Fees/Bar Association Dues

Note: If the Law Library facility stays open, expenditures related to the Law Library's telephone, utilities, and cleaning services may need to be shifted to Library, but this transfer would be cost neutral to the City.

If court case filing fees and Alexandria Bar Association dues revenues are the only funding streams available, the Library could ensure a virtual collection (Westlaw & Lexis/Nexis) was available via its website. This would include links to other e-books and databases considered essential to a Law Library website.

The City would need to verify that the Alexandria Bar Association is willing to continue to pay for a Law Library function, especially if the service delivery model is changing. The City would also need to make a determination about the future role of the Law Library Board depending on the option chosen.

3. What would it cost to catalog and determine the value of the resources held by the Law Library?

In order to determine the value of the resources held by the Law Library, an assessment of the collection would be required. This could be conducted in conjunction with the Law Library Board, but would also require procuring services from either the Arlington County Law Librarian, or a contractor with expert knowledge. The one-time cost estimate to catalog and determine the value of resources ranges from \$58,344 to \$88,284. Components of this cost estimate include:

- Review of the Existing Database: \$4,000
- Vendor Set-Up Cost: \$5,000
- Conversion of approximately 20,000 volumes from the current Law Library cataloging system to the Library's database system: \$49,344-\$79,284 in personnel costs, including fringe benefits (estimated at 30-40 hours per week).

It will take approximately one year to review the Law Library's collection, assess its database and then integrate those records into the Library's existing online catalog. This process will involve reviewing the Law Library's database for integration compatibility and condition of records for national and international cataloging and classification standards compliance. Staff will also need to consult with the Library's current automation service provider for the creation and addition of a "Law Library Branch" module into the Library's integrated library system. Finally, a cataloging librarian will be hired on a temporary basis to "clean up" the Law Library's catalog records and integrate those records into the Library's existing online catalog system.